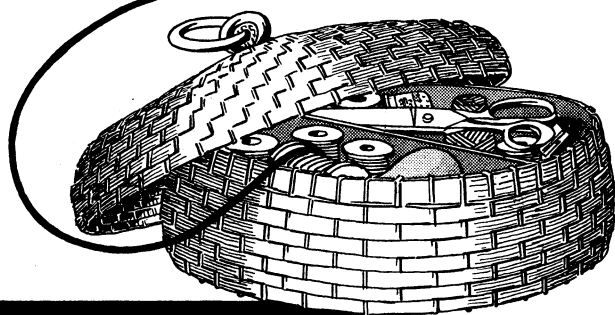
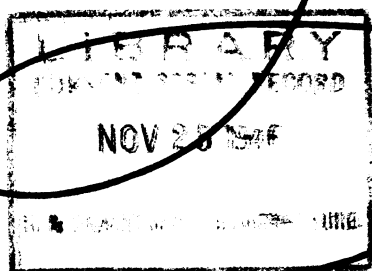


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ABC's of **MENDING**



FARMERS' BULLETIN No. 1925
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ABC'S OF MENDING

by

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A TINY HOLE or a tear can make a garment or household article practically useless. A well-done mend can make it like new again. Such is the magic of the art of mending...an art almost any homemaker can master.

What is a well-done mend? It may be any kind of patch or darn...chosen to suit the material and the damage to be repaired. More than that, it is done with the precision and care that make it both invisible and lasting.

Save Mending

Check all ready-mades before they are worn or used. The ways of manufacturing our clothes and household textiles are not always painstaking. Often there are weak spots in ready-mades, which if neglected can end in needless wear and tear—even the loss of a garment. But if you strengthen all weak spots with a few stitches or a reinforcement before using the article, you can save a bigger mending job later on.

Look over your clothing, bedding, towels, linens regularly with an eye to needed mending. If you catch breaks before they grow, you'll cut down a lot on mending time, the damaged places can be mended more easily and will show less.

Take a stitch in time. Once you've found a place that needs mending, mend it before the article is worn or used again.

Keep a Mending Basket Handy

Whenever you do your mending, you'll find a mending basket a big help. This may be a basket, box, bag, or large drawer...any place where you can keep mending supplies together. With mate-

rials all collected, it is easy to pick up bits of mending in your spare time and not have the chore of hunting for your equipment each time.

Keep in the mending basket different sizes of fine and coarse needles, different sizes and colors of thread, darning cotton...pins, buttons, snaps, hooks and eyes...tape, bits of net, scraps of patching material for everyday things...a stocking darning if you use one...ruler or tape measure...maybe a few patches of the kind you simply press on...and any other mending helps you use often.

Strengthen Ready-Mades

Check your ready-made clothes and household textiles before you use them to see if there are places that need strengthening. A few well-placed stitches can save much patching and darning later on...help you get the best possible service from what you buy.

Stitching. Rip out and restitch any broken, knotty, drawn or crooked stitching.

Seams. Examine the seams. Narrow seams may need to be stitched a little deeper to make them hold. If the material frays, but not badly, simple overcasting of the raw edges will make a seam secure. If the material frays quite readily, it's better to run a row of machine stitching near the cut edges—then overcast them.

A good way to keep unfinished seams from fraying and stretching is to stitch them twice...one row of stitching one-eighth to one-fourth inch inside the other. If the material frays or pulls badly, overcast the cut edges.

Hems. As a rule, hems are loosely sewed in ready-made dresses. Rehem with secure stitches and strong thread.

With needle and thread, stay the ends of hems on sheets, towels, pillowcases where stitching is clipped off even with the cloth.

Machine stitch or overhand open ends of hems on sheets and bath towels.

Dangling threads. Fasten off threads everywhere that stitching ends. Pull these threads to the inside and tie securely. Or if threads are long enough, run them through a needle and fasten with a few stitches...or pull inside a hem or fold.

Bindings. To save a big mending job later, make sure that all edges finished with binding are made to hold. If the binding is sewed too close to the edge, rip it, and move the binding in a little deeper, then restitch.

Lock-stitched edges. When terry towels and other loosely woven textiles have lock-stitched edges instead of hems or selvages, strengthen with a row or two of machine stitching. If the material is thin and the edge wide enough, turn the material under once before stitching.

Plackets. Plackets often need to be strengthened because there is considerable strain at the ends. Put in extra stitches at the end of the placket, or sew tape stays across the ends on the underside.

Pocket corners. Strengthen pockets at the corners to keep them from tearing. For pockets on a blouse, a second row of stitching usually is enough. Dress and apron pockets must be more sturdy. Lay a piece of tape on the underside in line with the pocket top. Stitch it in with the corners.

Stretchy edges. Neck lines, collars, plackets, and pockets not cut on the straight of the goods sometimes stretch, then tear. Stay these places by sewing tape on the underside of the outer edges. Or rip open the facing, sew tape next to the edge, and restitch facing.

Fastenings. Rework raveled or weak buttonholes with a buttonhole or blanket stitch. If the buttonhole is completely raveled, machine stitch close to the cut edge of the hole. Then work the buttonhole by hand.

Resew loose buttons with strong thread. Leave a shank of thread so the buttonhole can slip under the button without straining the cloth.

Resew snaps or hooks and eyes neatly and securely. Use strong but not heavy thread that matches the material.

Patching and Darning Pointers

Suit Mend to Break

Here are points to think about when you are deciding which darn or patch will be best for that place you have to mend:

Shape of the place to be mended. A bad snag naturally calls for a different type of mend than a slanting cut or a straight tear.

Material. Does it have a nap or is it smooth? Is it light or heavy in weight? Is it washable or must it be dry-cleaned? Does it fray?

Size of the hole. Some mends are more successfully done on a small scale...others on large.

Where is the hole? Is it in a spot that will be strained constantly during use? Or is it in an out-of-the-way place? This makes a difference in how strong the mend must be.

Patches

Cut a patch on the straight of the goods. Sew it on so the crosswise and lengthwise yarns in the patch match crosswise and lengthwise yarns in the material.

If the material has a design, match each detail perfectly. That helps hide the mend.

If you have something old and faded, try to get a matching patch...perhaps from the hem or facing of a dress...under a cushion or from the valance on a slip cover.

Always shrink new material before using it to patch anything that has been dry-cleaned or washed...or the patch may shrink and pucker.

Darns

Plain darns are suitable for mending small holes, snags, worn places. Except for small holes and worn spots, darns are seldom used on any material except wool, some laces, or heavy fabrics somewhat like wool in texture.

Use thread that blends with the material. Pull yarns from a scrap of the same cloth if you have any. Or ravel them from straight-cut seams or edges where they may be spared. Use lengthwise yarns for darning lengthwise...crosswise yarns for crosswise darning. If you are raveling yarns from a garment, you may be able to get crosswise yarns from the inside of the hem...lengthwise yarns from the seam allowances in the skirt and waist. To get lengthwise yarns for darning a drapery or bedspread, trim off a selvage or rip a side hem, ravel off a few yarns, trim, and refinish the edge. Take the crosswise yarns from one end.

If you can't get self yarn, use dull sewing thread that blends with the material. Thread usually works up lighter than it appears on the spool, so it is better to buy slightly darker thread.

Study the weave of the fabric. Repeat it as closely as you can. Work under a strong light.

Use a fine needle and short thread. Long thread pulled back and forth across a tear or hole tends to pull and stretch a darn out of shape.

Work for flatness. If the yarns are pulled up tight, the finished darn puckers and looks drawn. Too loose stitching, on the other hand, makes the darn look "puffy."

Draw the mending yarn through the yarns in the cloth itself when you can. Take tiny stitches and be especially careful not to pull them too taut when you make a turn. Run the stitches unevenly

into the cloth around the edge of the darn...so there is no definite line where the darn starts.

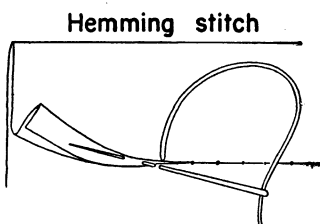
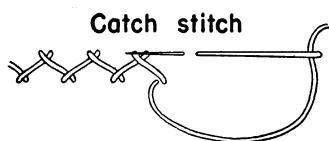
Pull ends of darning yarns to the inside of the garment and cut them off...but not too closely. Be sure that all raw edges of the hole or tear are on the underside of the darn.

Usually it's better to darn on the right side of the material, so you can see how well you are blending the darn into the fabric.

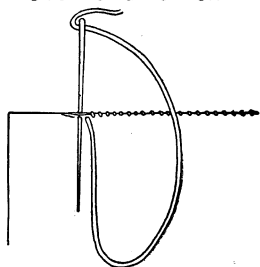
Press the finished darn. Steam-press on the wrong side. Brush darns on wool on the right side to lift the nap.

A general mending guide that may help you select the best type of mend for the commonest types of holes follows. But remember, there are no hard-and-fast mending rules. Work out mends of your own, keeping in mind that the main idea is simply to reproduce the original as nearly as possible.

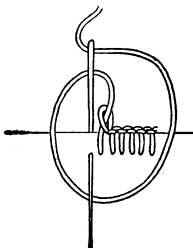
BASIC MENDING STITCHES



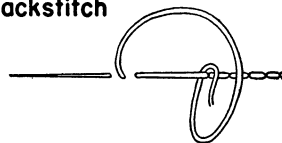
Overhand stitch



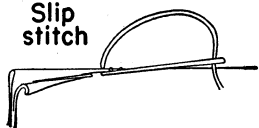
Buttonhole stitch



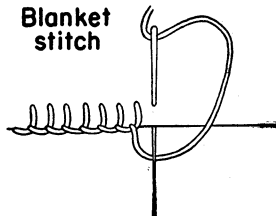
Backstitch



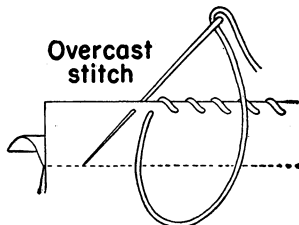
Slip stitch



Blanket stitch



Overcast stitch



Straight Tears ... Diagonal Cuts

When a fabric tears, it always breaks straight along crosswise or lengthwise yarns. The simplest tear is the straight tear in one direction.

Unlike a tear, a cut seldom breaks the material straight along crosswise or lengthwise yarns. More often it breaks the material diagonally...cutting yarns in both directions with one slit. Such a cut stretches and loses shape if you don't mend it right away.

Washable Materials ...

Materials that Fray in Dry-Cleaning

Clothes and household articles that must go through many tubbings need sturdy mends—so do those that fray easily even though they are dry-cleaned. Three most suitable repairs, unless the hole is very small, are the hemmed patch, lapped patch, and pressed-on or thermoplastic patch.

Hemmed patch. This is a sturdy mend done by hand. To make it, first cut the smallest possible square or rectangle that will remove the snag, hole, cut, or tear. Cut along crosswise and lengthwise yarns. Then clip this hole diagonally at each corner—about one-fourth of an inch. Turn under slightly beyond the ends of these clips. Crease sharply or press but be careful not to stretch the material.

Slide a piece of matching material under the hole until the design matches exactly. Cut a patch about 1 inch larger all around than the hole. Baste the patch in place...then from the right side hem with very fine stitches, especially at the corners. Let these stitches catch in the very edge of the crease.

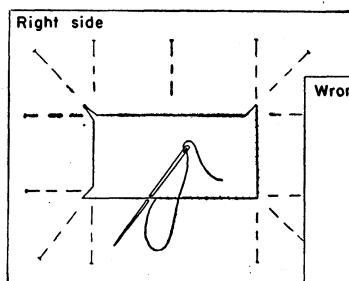
Now turn to the wrong side. If the material is a lightweight washable, turn the patch piece under about one-fourth inch. Snip off the corners to avoid thick lumps. Baste and hem with stitches so tiny they will not be noticeable on the right side. This patch is good for tubbables, such as house dresses, play and work clothes.

For heavy, less firmly woven materials, such as some drapery and slip-cover fabrics, damasklike bedspreads, and thin blankets, a variation of the hemmed patch...the catch-stitched hemmed patch...is less bulky. Cut the patch as described above. Machine stitch twice around the outside of the patch...once close to the edge, again a little further in. Then baste the patch in place. After hemming on the right side, turn to the underside and catch stitch the raw edge of the patch to the article being repaired.

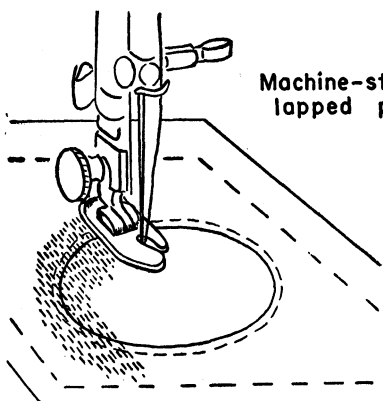
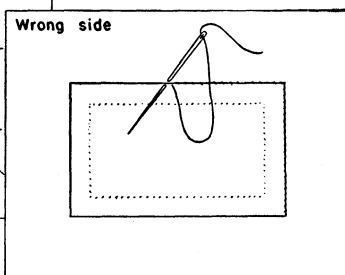
Lapped patch. This mend is suitable when sturdiness is more important than appearance. First cut away all ragged edges and make a round hole. Lay a matched piece of cloth underneath and baste it in place. Then on the right side, stitch back and forth over the cut edge until it is firm and secure with no rough ends. Cut away extra material on the underside, not caught in the stitching. Or if the fabric around the hole is weak, leave on this extra goods and fasten it with tailor's tacks. They hold the material flat and do not show on the right side.

Stitch a lapped patch by machine if you are mending shirts, children's play clothes, overalls, sheets, or dish towels...by hand, on thick materials, as blankets or bath towels, where there is less strain. Hand darning makes the mend less stiff.

When patching heavily napped blankets—cotton or wool—shear some of the fuzz from both the underside of the blanket and the top of the patch where the two overlap. This makes the mend less bungle-some and does not weaken it if you are careful not to clip the yarns in the cloth.

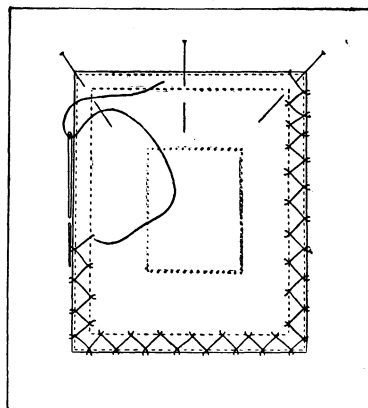


Hemmed patch



Machine-stitched lapped patch

Catch-stitched hemmed patch



Patches to press on. These are made of various types of material, treated on one side so that they may be pressed on to the material. They are best suited to men's shirts, women's uniforms, and woven cotton underwear. If you cut out your own patches from treated material, make corners rounded rather than sharp. They stick better and more smoothly. These patches may be bought at many notion counters.

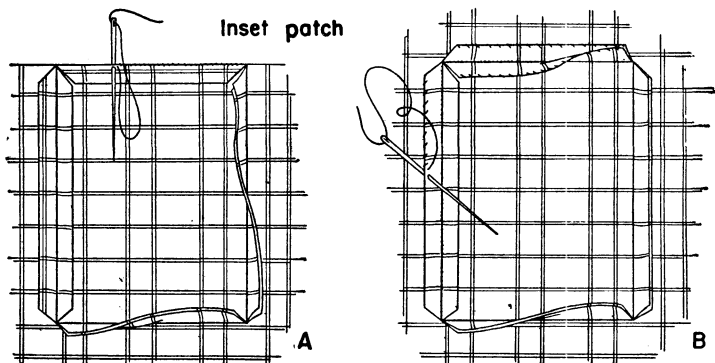
Dry-cleanable Silks and Rayons

An inset patch is a good mend for most silks and rayons that will be dry-cleaned instead of washed. Hemmed or lapped patches (pp. 8 and 9) may also be used but they show more on silks and rayons than the inset patch.

Inset patch. Cut around the damaged place with the grain of the goods so that it forms a square or rectangle. Clip the corners as for a hemmed patch...turn the edges under evenly and exactly with the grain of the goods all around. Press, do not crease with your fingernail, because that stretches soft materials.

If the fabric is printed, shift the patch piece around under the hole until you find the exact spot that matches. Then pin it in place so you can mark the exact size of the inset. From this point, there are two ways to go ahead with the patch.

First way to finish is to check the exact size patch that fits the hole. Do this by pushing a pin through the patch at each corner, then turn under between pins, press, and trim off the extra material, leaving only a small seam allowance. The amount you leave depends on the material—more seam allowance is necessary for materials that fray. Check again to make sure that patch fits the hole exactly. From the wrong side, overhand the patch into the hole with tiny stitches caught through the two folded edges (see illustration A). When the patch is done, press it flat with the seams open. Overcast the raw edges so they won't fray in cleaning (see illustration B).



Second way to finish the inset patch after matching the patch to the hole is as follows: Use long hemming stitches and contrasting thread to baste the patch in place. Let these stitches catch only in the edge of the fold. They serve as a guide for the inside stitching and will be pulled out later. Now turn to the wrong side and stitch by machine exactly on this line of hand stitching. Trim off extra material—clip off thick corners. Steam-press with the seams open.

Wool

A plain weave hand darn is the best way to mend most small tears or cuts in wool material. For a larger hole, use a darned-in patch or an inset patch. The inset patch is better for thinner wools...the darned-in patch for thick ones. A lapped patch (p. 9) is more suitable for thick reversible wools such as blankets.

Straight-tear hand darn. To darn a straight tear in wools, start and finish about one-quarter inch beyond the tear. With matching thread and a fine needle, stitch back and forth across the tear on the right side with tiny stitches. Keep the stitches exactly in line with the yarns in the cloth. The darn will show less if you extend the rows of stitching unevenly into the fabric (p. 12). As you turn to stitch in the opposite direction, let the thread go in easily—do not pull it tight. To make the mend stronger, darn over a piece of the same cloth or any thin material basted to the underside. If the tear is frayed, weave over and under the loose yarns. Let the ends of broken yarns go to the underside.

To darn a tear in heavy reversible materials, such as blankets, snip off short ravelings, draw torn edges together, matching the design if there is one, and pin to a piece of tough paper. Catch the two edges with a needle and matching sewing thread. Darn across the slit, following lengthwise and crosswise yarns in the material or the pattern in the weave...whichever shows the least.

Diagonal hand darn. To darn a diagonal cut, first baste a piece of the same material or net on the underside to keep the cut from stretching. Then with fine needle and matching thread or yarns, work from the right side and weave back and forth across the cut, following the yarns in the cloth as for a straight tear. In some twilled materials the darn shows less if stitches follow the diagonal pattern in the weave rather than yarns of the cloth.

On heavy, reversible materials such as blankets, pin a piece of tough paper to the underside to hold a diagonal cut in shape while you darn.

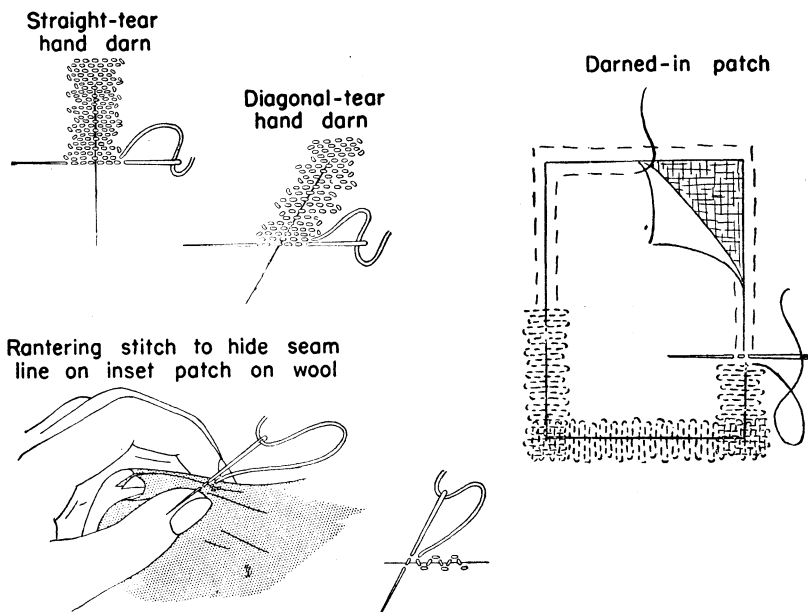
Darned-in patch. If the cloth does not fray, use a darned-in patch where a plain darn or patch might not look right. It is a fairly sturdy mend...not so bulky and easily noticed on thick wool as a

hemmed patch. Trim the hole so it is either square or rectangular. Cut the patch to fit the hole exactly, also to match the pattern and grain of the cloth. Baste the patch to net, fit the hole down over the patch, then baste to hold all together while you work. Use dull matching thread and darn each of the four sides of the patch as you would straight tears. Overlap the darns at the corners to strengthen them.

Inset patch. To make this mend on lightweight wools, follow directions for the machine-seamed inset patch, page 11. You can hide the seam line with a rantering stitch. Pinch the seam line on the right side between thumb and forefinger. Stitch back and forth over the seam, being careful to catch only one yarn on each side of the seam. Pull the thread up close. When steam-pressed, this patch is hardly noticeable.

Corduroys, Velveteens, and Other Pile Fabrics

A darned-in patch may be used to mend pile materials where there won't be strain. But work the darn from the wrong side of the material instead of the right. When finished, brush well on the right side to lift the pile.



Three-Corner Tears

All Materials Except Wool

Patch small three-corner tears as you would straight tears. Trim the hole to form a square or rectangle. Then make a hemmed patch (p. 8), or an inset patch (p. 10).

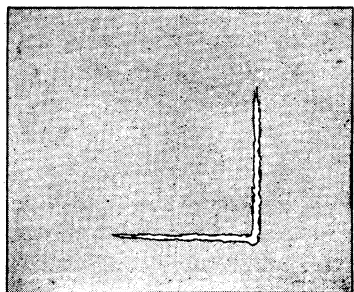
Hemmed three-corner patch. Use this patch to mend large three-corner tears on all materials except wool. The three-corner patch may also be used on small three-corner tears if material for patching is scarce. Except for its shape, the patch is made the same way as a plain hemmed patch (p. 8).

Wool

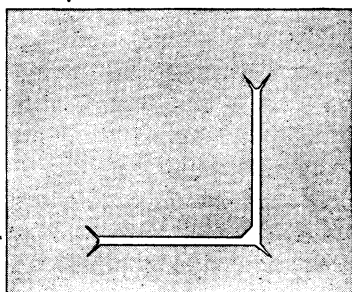
Three-corner hand darn. To mend most three-cornered tears on wool, large or small, use the three-corner hand darn. Darn as though each side were a straight tear. At the corner the two straight darns will lap over each other. This gives extra strength where needed.

Like a straight darn, this one may be worked over net or a piece of cloth laid on the underside for strength. Work with special care where the darns lap at the corner or your mend may be bulky and show.

Hemmed three-corner patch

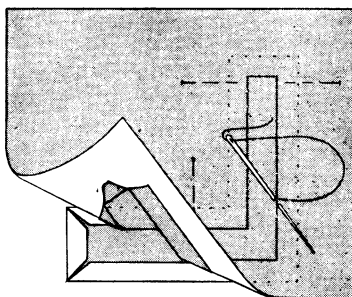
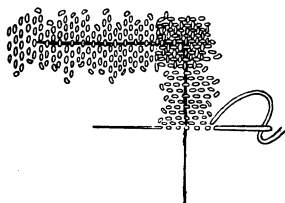


A



B

Three-corner hand darn

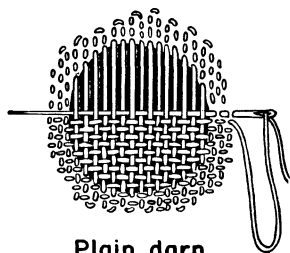


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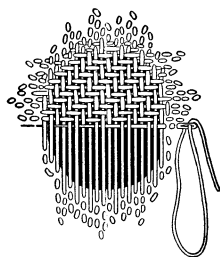
Snags and Small Holes

Woven Materials

These materials may be mended with a plain hand darn or by reweaving. Reweaving is nothing more than a darn done carefully with matched yarn, so that it reproduces the original almost exactly.



Plain darn



Pattern darn

Plain darn. To darn small holes, first get matching thread. If you ravel yarns from a piece of self material, use crosswise yarns for crosswise darning, lengthwise yarns for lengthwise stitches.

Leave the hole in its original shape, which usually is round. Trim off the ragged edges. Fill in new lengthwise yarns. Then, keeping the darn flat, work with small stitches back and forth across the hole...and far enough into the fabric to strengthen the thin area around the hole.

Pattern darn. For materials having a distinct weave, a pattern darn, which repeats the weave of the cloth, shows less than a plain darn. The simplest pattern darn, illustrated above, shows how the darning produces the diagonal in a twill. To make other pattern darnings, first study the weave in the cloth to see how the lengthwise and crosswise yarns are interwoven...then reproduce it as nearly as possible. The pattern darn is suitable for blankets, loosely woven suitings, and damask tablecloths.

Knits

In knit material, snags or breaks stretch to form holes. Mend these while they are still small. The following mends will take care of most knit repair. For any of these mends you'll need matching yarn. Ravel out a pocket or some other part of the garment you can do without...or you may be able to buy a matching skein.

To keep a simple break in the knitting from growing, catch the end of each loop with a needle and matching thread. Tie off securely on the wrong side.

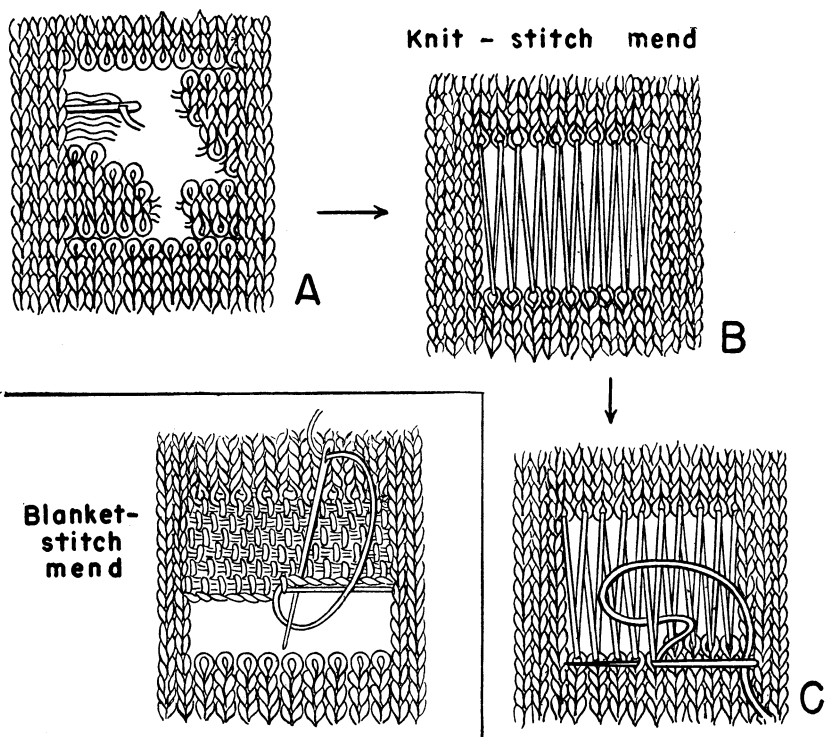
Knit-stitch mend. If the knit is plain, you can copy the stitch with a knit stitch. This mend hardly shows, and it will “give” as much as the rest of the garment.

First make two horizontal cuts—one above the hole, one below it. Ravel the knit to the ends of the cuts. A thread may be run through the loops at the top and bottom of the hole to be sure they won't ravel. Thread each loose end and run it back through the fabric on the underside (A).

Then with matching yarn zigzag across the hole lengthwise (B). Work the knit stitch as shown below (C).

Blanket-stitch mend. This is easier to do than the knit stitch, but it shows more and has no “give.” Use this stitch only where the garment will not be stretched in use.

Ravel out a square hole as illustrated for the knit-stitch mend (A). Thread each loose end and run it back through the fabric on the underside. Then pull in a crosswise yarn and work back over it with loose blanket stitches...one for each knitting stitch. Pull another yarn crosswise. Work back over it with blanket stitches and continue until the hole is filled.



Special Mends

Fastenings

Buttons. Sew buttons on with a thread shank to prevent strain on the cloth. To make the shank, lay a couple of pins across the top of the button and sew over them. Pull out the pins, lift the button, and hold it while the thread is wound around underneath.

If the cloth underneath a button has been torn—make a patch, then sew the button on again with a shank. On wools, rayons, and silks make a small inset patch (p. 10). On cottons make a strong hemmed patch (p. 8).

If a button has to stand a lot of pull, stay it on the underside with a piece of tape, ribbon binding, or a piece of selvage of the same material. On coats, jackets, and heavy cottons, sew a tiny stay button on the wrong side directly beneath the button.

Buttonholes. In ready-made clothes buttonholes often break at the ends and ravel. Fasten off any part not raveled, then rework with buttonhole or blanket stitch (p. 7). If the hole has raveled out completely, machine stitch around it...close to the edge. Then rework the buttonhole. Fasten off with stitches that will strengthen the end of the buttonhole.

Snaps...hooks and eyes. Sew these fasteners on through every little hole with as strong thread as will match the weight of the cloth. Save old fasteners on clothing you discard.

Pinholes. Heavy pins or brooches worn on dresses and blouses sooner or later catch yarns, leave ragged holes. A good thing to do is to work eyelets where the pin goes through the material.

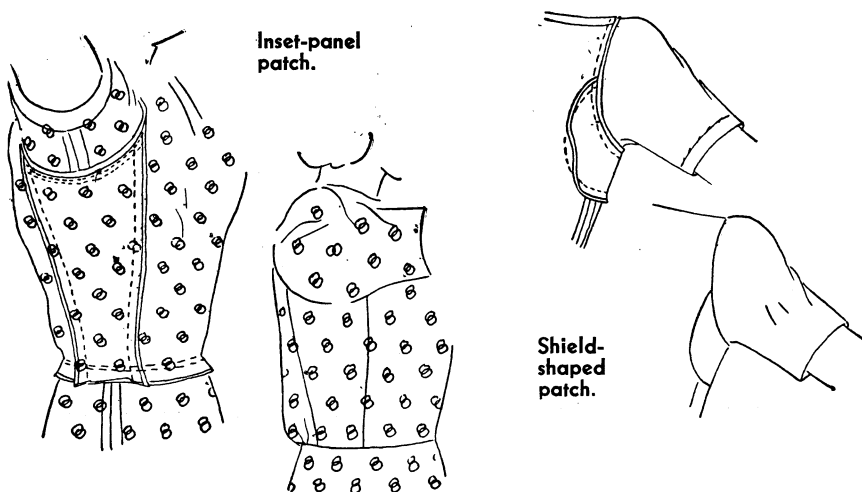
Underarm Wear

Underarm sections of dresses and blouses that have become worn or stained can be patched.

If only a small patch is needed, set in a shield-shaped matching piece of material. If the dress is ready-made, you may be able to get patch material from the hem, from pockets, or other style details you can do without. Seam the patch in under the arm, as shown on page 17.

Remember when you cut the patch that you must leave double seam allowance on the patch edge to be seamed to the waist material—to make up for the seam allowance that is taken out of the waist.

If it is necessary to patch the sleeve as well as the waist, make a similar shield-shaped patch. Or seam in a triangular gusset.



For larger patches, use scraps of self material if you made the dress yourself and have scraps available. Or you may have a jacket or bolero that you can get along without in order to save the dress itself.

To make a panel patch, cut out the underarm section from the sleeve down to the waist. Using this as a pattern, cut, match, and seam in a new piece. Don't forget to allow the seam allowance twice on edges to be seamed to the waist.

Worn Spots

As soon as you see worn spots on the elbows of a garment or in other places that get wear, do some preventive darning to make the garment wear longer and save yourself more difficult mending later on. Use matching thread—weave it in and out to look as much like the material as possible.

Reinforce the underside of the thin spot with a piece of matching or similar material. Sometimes you can cut a piece from the hem if no scraps are available. Darn back and forth, through, and slightly beyond the thin spot, with tiny stitches on the right side. Keep the rows of stitching parallel with the lengthwise and crosswise yarns of the fabric. Sometimes it is enough to stitch back and forth with matching yarn raveled from the seams or a scrap of material. On knits, reinforce thin places by darning on the inside of the garment.

If elbows of sweaters and knit dresses wear through, cut off the sleeves above the elbow and move the wristlets up to finish off the short sleeves. Stretch the cut edges as you sew on a wristlet, so the

stitching won't break when worn. Seam and finish so the knit stitches can't ravel.

If elbows on children's, men's, and boys' sweaters wear through, sew oval patches of felt or leatherlike materials on the outside. Old gloves, old handbags, felt hats, or ready-made patches sold at novelty counters can be used.

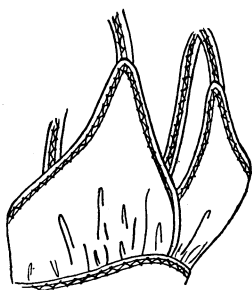
Small Repairs on Clothing

Lingerie. Net or lace will wear a little longer if you machine stitch back and forth over small breaks or worn places. If broken places are large, baste to a piece of net footing, then stitch by machine. Mend broken edges of lace with a short blanket stitch. Use thread of matching weight.

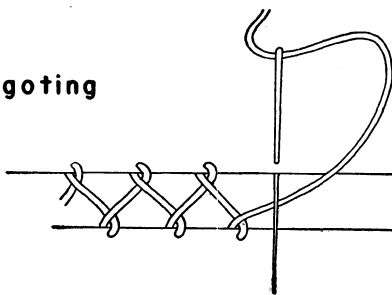
Mend small holes in lace girdles with loose darns of matching thread.

Pulled-out shoulder straps on slips and brassieres often take pieces of the garment with them. Mend these by setting in little patches. Try to make them an attractive part of the garment. Put them on in diamond or triangular pieces and finish with Bermuda fagoting. Bermuda fagoting is hemstitching without pulled threads.

Fagoting on slips and gowns often breaks long before the garment wears out. When these breaks start, you can refagot them easily as shown. Baste the two edges to be reworked to a piece of strong paper...leaving space for fagoting. Cut and pick out the old fagoting...then restitch to make it look as much like the original as possible. Another way to mend broken fagoting is to rip out about an inch of fagoting at a time...then follow with new stitches. Buttonhole twist matches best the thread used in lingerie fagoting.



Fagoting



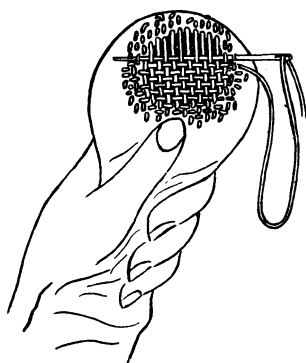
Pulled-out seams. When a seam pulls out, the garment usually is already too close-fitting to allow for deeper seams. On a tailored dress with outside stitching you can mend pulled-out seams with an outside-stitched seam. First, reseam the garment even though there is scarcely any seam. Then, on the underside of the seam, lay a piece of narrow matching tape. Stitch on the outside along both sides of the seam line, so the finished effect looks right with the rest of the dress.

If you have extra scraps of material, you sometimes can mend broken seams with small insets. Put the insets in to look as though they were part of the original dress design. Thus you can enlarge the garment at the same time you mend the seams.

Shirt collars. Rip off the collar; turn and resew it. For white shirts, it is easier and usually more practical to buy new collars at the notion counters. Try to match the quality of shirt broadcloth in the new collar. You won't be able to buy matching collars for colored shirts.

Hosiery

To darn a hole in a stocking foot, leave the hole in the round shape it took as it developed. Snip away ragged edges. Then, with a darning or your hand in the stocking, work with small stitches back and forth across the hole and far enough into the fabric around the hole to strengthen the thin, weak spot there. Darn in one direction, then the other—weaving in and out to make a plain weave.



Use only as many strands of the darning yarn as you need to match the weight of the stocking. The darn will look better and wear longer if you use yarn of the correct weight.

Patches that press on may also be used—these are most suitable for holes or weak places in stocking feet where they will not show.

When new hose run, they may be mended to look like new at shops that specialize in this work. If you mend your own, take a fine needle and fine matching thread. First catch the stitch that is making the run. Then, using the overhand stitch and working from the wrong side, mend the stocking a little beyond the ends of the run. Tie your mending thread securely when you finish. A special hook is available for reknitting runs, but it requires time and much patience to develop skill in using it.

Bath Towels, Bath Mats

When the selvage first begins to fray, stitch it to a narrow tape...or if the selvage is wide enough, turn it down once and stitch two or three times on the machine.

Darn small holes in the body of a terry towel with darning cotton. Clip off the loose loop yarns even with the edge of the hole, then mend with a plain darn (p. 14).

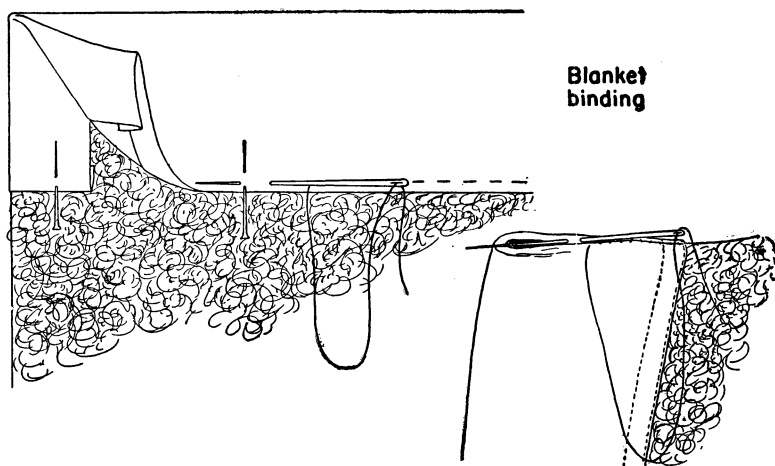
Repair damaged or worn terry bath mats the same as bath towels. Or cut off the worn part, if it is near the edge, and bind the new edge with a twilled tape, carpet binding, or straight piece of heavy muslin.

Repair tufted or chenille bath mats and curtains the same as tufted bedspreads (p. 21).

Blankets

When bindings wear out on blankets that are still good, rip off the ragged binding, and replace with a new one, as shown below. Be sure to shrink the new binding before you use it.

If the blanket is old and worn and not worth putting on new binding, finish the edge with a blanket stitch. First rip off the old binding, then trim away any ravelings, straighten the blanket edge, and steam-press. On a thick blanket, stitch a couple of times on the machine—once close to the edge, again about a quarter of an inch farther in. Then finish the edge with a blanket stitch (p. 7). On lightweight blankets, first baste in a narrow hem, then sew with the blanket stitching.



Bedspreads

When you need patching material take it from the corners at the foot or from one end of an extra long spread. Face or hem raw edges where you cut out the pieces.

To mend chenille and tufted bedspreads, set in a piece cut from the corner, if the design is the same...or patch with muslin similar in weight to the foundation fabric. Sometimes on straight tears the edges can just be overhanded together. Then put in new tufts and the mend will scarcely show. If you can't get tufting yarn to match, six-strand embroidery floss will do. Double it enough times to make tufts the same size as those in the rest of the spread.

Darn lace bedspreads as you would a lace curtain. If badly torn, set in a piece of net as nearly like that in the spread as you can find.

Sheets, Pillowcases

When hems split along the fold, trim off the frayed edges, turn them in and overhand the two together. Or if there is extra length, rip out the old hem, cut off along the old fold, and turn a new hem.

When pillowcases are worn along the side folds, rip out the end hem where it crosses the folds, take a seam deep enough to catch the line of wear, then restitch the hem.

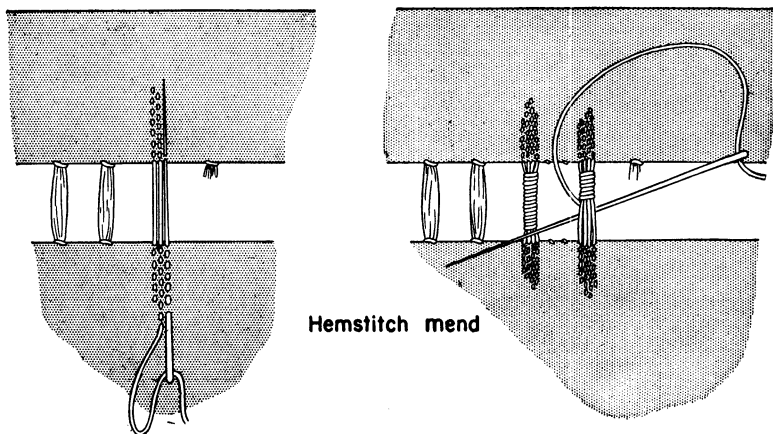
If hemstitching breaks in a place or two before the pillowcase or sheet wears out, fill in the "spokes" with a needle and thread (p. 22).

When hemstitching breaks in several places, trim the "points" close to the fabric, turn down a narrow edge, and fagot the old hem back on (p. 18). Or insert rickrack braid, white or colored, to join the hem and sheet or pillowcase.

Tablecloths

Mend small holes in good linen tablecloths or napkins with yarns from the linen even if you have to sacrifice a napkin to get them.

For larger holes, take patching material from an old tablecloth similar in pattern and weight or from a matching napkin. If the patch comes in a suitable place, work a monogram over it. Choose one large enough to extend beyond the edge of the patch and the repair will be almost entirely concealed...it then becomes a decoration instead of a blemish.



If hemstitching in hems breaks, repair as shown above. Or cut off the hemstitching and finish the ends with hems.

When the hemstitched edge on luncheon cloths or napkins pulls off, have a row of hemstitching put just inside the old. Trim the frayed edge to within one-eighth of an inch of the stitching; then roll the hem and buttonhole or blanket stitch over it with matching thread.

Darn or reweave holes in lace tablecloths. With matching thread, fill in missing yarns, spacing them as in the cloth itself.

Curtains, Window Shades

Curtains of lace, net, marquisette, and similar materials usually split lengthwise before they wear out crosswise. If you have any left-over remnants, ravel some of the yarns from one end, thread one in a needle, and weave in new crosswise yarns. Otherwise, use sewing thread of similar size and color. These repairs rarely show after they are laundered, particularly if the curtains hang full at the window.

If the holes are near the edge on wide curtains, trim off the damaged part and put in a new hem. On some narrow curtains, a ruffle of net, a contrasting applied hem or facing is suitable. Sometimes narrow strips from two or three curtains can be tinted different harmonizing colors and sewed together.

Mend tears or splits in window shades with transparent adhesive tape or by pasting a strip of matching cloth or paper to the underside. Lay the shade on any flat surface, wrong side up. Draw the torn edges together, then apply the patch. Cut off torn hems and re-hem the end. If the shade pulls off the roller, take out the tacks, cut off the ragged edge, and retack in place.

Shower Curtains

Use adhesive tape to mend oiled silk and plastic shower curtains. To repair a split or a three-corner tear, lay the shower curtain on a flat surface, draw the torn edges together, and apply the tape—transparent for thin or colored curtains, regular adhesive for the heavier white opaque ones.

Also use the tape to set in patches in shower curtains of this type. Cut a patch the same size as the hole from a corner of the curtain, the lower edge if the curtain is plenty long, or perhaps from a matching window drapery. Lay the curtain wrong side up on a table, fit the patch in place, then put a strip of adhesive over the raw edges just as though it were a tear. Repeat on all sides.

Patch canvas or duck curtains with an inset patch (p. 10), a machine-stitched lapped patch (p. 9), or one of the new patches that can be pressed on. Use an inset patch to mend a rayon curtain.

Slip Covers, Upholstery

Replace worn cording in slip covers or take the cording out and stitch a plain seam.

If you have no left-over pieces, or the material has faded, use the valance or take patching material from a place where the fabric you substitute won't show, such as the underside of the cushion or the outside back.

To repair cuts and tears in upholstery where it gets little strain, use a patch that can be pressed on or a piece of adhesive carpet binding. Cut the patch about an inch longer and wider than the hole...slip it under the hole, sticky side up...draw the upholstery together...cover with a cloth and press with a warm iron.

On the seat or back where there will be considerable strain, a sewed-on patch wears better. Choose the kind of patch best suited to the fabric, then loosen the upholstery, patch the hole, and retack the material to the furniture frame. For a large hole or a thin area, cut the patch large enough to extend well beyond the worn place, turn edges under on all sides, match the pattern, and slip stitch the patch to the upholstery on the right side.

Mend pile upholstery fabrics the same as other pile materials (p. 12).

Re-cover worn chair arms. Get material for this, as well as for patching, from the outside back or from the underside of a cushion. You can replace the upholstery removed for repair with a material or a remnant of upholstery fabric that harmonizes even though it doesn't match exactly.

